

[72] collectively obliged to make reprisals for an injury done one of its
[73] members. Much more often, given the very lively and permanent
animosity which reigns between the groups, these pretexts good for
exciting the spirit are voluntarily entertained, especially if they
feel strong either because of the importance of the group's strength
or because of an alliance with neighboring bands against a common
enemy, concluded by the intermediary of messengers acting as
[57] ambassadors. The proposition of war is presented by an exalted in-
dividual or one who exposes before his companions his particular
griefs, in the same tone and style that speeches were made at the
encounter.

39. ē akinaē pednaē gōdegāē kakonē orōnē galagrīnē (b1)
whose approximate sense is: "Hello! Come here! Let's go! I am
irritated! very irritated! arrows! big arrows!" The Indians become
so excited upon the occasion of these epic speeches that it is not
possible to obtain the commentary of the formula except well after
they have been cited and undoubtedly very unfaithfully. But war is
not a matter of purely profane decision. It necessitates a preliminary
ceremony which will determine if the signs are favorable or not.

[242] Dressed in special attire, tufts of buriti straw dappled with red, hoods
[539] of jaguar skin, the men assemble under the leadership of the chief
and execute the special dance and chant of war. (1) A divining rite

• [78]

1. Dances and music will be the object of a special
publication.

[222] is then performed. The chief, or the sorcerer in the groups where he
[759] exists, goes solemnly to hide an arrow in a corner of the bush. The
[789] arrow is retrieved the next day. If it is covered with blood, the ex-
pedition is undertaken, if not, it is given up. (2) Many warlike

[17]

2. This symbolic use of an arrow seems typical of cultures
situated north of the Amazon. The fact is interesting,
given the northern affinities of the Nambikwara language.
Concerning the use of the arrow as the message of war, cf.
Roth, "An inquiry," etc., Annual report of the Bureau
of American Ethnology, 30, p. 362; Koch-Grünberg, Zwei
Jahre unter den Indianern, etc., Berlin, 1910, Vol. II, p.
316; Gumilla, Historia Natural del Rio Orinoco, Barcelona,
1791, Vol. I, p. 134.

expeditions thus begun end after several kilometers of marching.

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and Nimuendaju, "Die Sagen von der Erschaffung und Vernichtung der Welt als Grundlagen der Religion der Apapocuva Guarani," Zeitschrift für Ethnologie, Berlin, XLVI, 1914. Also, the atshu in question in the preceding paragraph, curiously evoke the yurupari, or ananga, ancient Tupi genies of the bush against which they defend themselves with a flaming torch which thus plays the same role as the magic javelin (cf. Thévet, cited by Métraux, loc. cit., p. 61). Finally, the atshu itself often appears in the form of the jaguar; and in the eastern groups at least, it plays the role of the Messenger of Death which the central, southern, and northern groups give over to the jaguar. There is thus in the vocabulary, a close connection between the stars, the jaguar and the atshu, already noted by Claude d'Abbeville (cited by Métraux, l. c., p. 49) among the Tupinamba: these identified the jaguar with the stars. Like the "celestial" jaguar (Montoya), the "man-eating" (Nimuendaju), the jaguar of the Nambikwara presents a remarkable ambivalence: it is sacred, and at the same time, they kill it. Finally, comparative linguistics confirms the connection. The term which means jaguar in dialect ai, inašhu is associated with the name of the jaguar among the central and southern Tupi: yaouare (Emerillon, Coutreau); saoruhu (Guaajara, Nimuendaju); jaoarohu (Tapirapé, Kissenberth).

[101] COMMUNICATION WITH A SUPERNATURAL WORLD:
SHAMANISM.

●787

It is considered possible to receive visions of far-distant things and revelations of future happenings. These supernatural communications are usually produced upon the occasion of tempests and storms. They are sudden and unforeseen. Every adult male is apt to receive them, for in this case too, the women (except, it seems, the oldest) are excluded from the spiritual life:

42. iašidadni deñō tamufmatatjani nahoe ejni ekusjeni
kanahaday uatli aikyaauatli'kentete (b1)

Invisible to women the men see 'it [the thunder]: "Far away I see, close by I see, tomorrow it will arrive, very near it will arrive."

(It is a question here of a warning vision of messengers come from another tribe).

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These visions are attributed to the thunder which sends them to men under its semi-personal form amõ.

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Thus the Nambikwara conceive of three types of supernatural forces: first the power which is abstract, but placed in objects or substances, the ndare; next the spirits acting in the form of supernatural or seminaturnal animals, atim or jaguar. Finally the thunder, with which under certain conditions, it is possible to entertain personal relations. Each individual can, in a certain measure, establish contact with these forces, however it is the shamans who have the specialized function of intermediary between the human group and the supernatural world. The information which we shall give on this point will be very summary, for it was impossible to obtain from our informants a coherent treatment of the question of shamanism. None of the groups encountered had a shaman with the exception of a single one (group c) where the powers of the chief and the sorcerer were found [102] concentrated in a single individual (C20). Our best informant, B1, chief of the allied group, was categorical concerning the fact that C20 combined the two qualities of gellikabala (chief, c) and of ndare (thunder, c) although he was only gellikade, temporal chief. The sorcerer would then be simultaneously the man who identifies himself with thunder, and who communicates with it in the personal form called amõ. Likewise, in the eastern groups (a1 restricted and enlarged, and a2), it was not possible to uncover the presence of a sorcerer or of an individual with such powers. This fact could be interpreted in three different ways: that the sorcerers were held apart; or that they dissimulated their nature; that the institution of the sorcerer is, in fact, absent in certain groups; or that, in these same groups, the functions of the sorcerer are exercised by the chief, and that, in inverse fashion to what is produced in group c, it is the spiritual functions which are in second place with regard to the temporal. It is this hypothesis which we consider the most reasonable. In group a1, A1 makes the arrow poison and treats sick persons by suction, functions which in group c come within the province of C20 considered as shaman, rather than chief of the group.

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Whatever the fact may be, and as we have just said, it is the sorcerer who makes the poisons, and it is he who proceeds to the magical treatment of the sick, clearly different from the positive therapeutics likewise practiced. The Nambikwara are familiar with quite a large number of medicinal plants and treat certain illnesses with their help. Thus they care for purulent ophthalmia by an

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tainship is not hereditary; the chief, when old or sick, designates his successor from the ablest men of the group. The chief's authority is slight; it depends wholly on the good will of the family heads. 622

Relations between neighboring bands are inspired both by fear and by the desire to exchange goods. Warfare, therefore, is closely connected with barter. Groups not acquainted with each other use ritual speech when they meet. 619 438

Before starting a war expedition, a divinatory rite is performed with special songs and dances. An arrow is hidden by the shaman, the outcome of the expedition being presaged by its appearance the following day. 721 787

LIFE CYCLE

Childbirth.—After the delivery of a child, the placenta is buried in the bush and both parents are subjected to rigid prohibitions concerning food, the use of ornaments, and social contacts. 847

Puberty.—The initiation rite for young men consists of piercing their lips and nose and giving them their adult personal name. At her first menstruation, a girl is isolated for several months in a special shelter outside the village, where she is given ritual food by her mother. At the end of the rite, she takes a long bath in the river; this also constitutes the first step of the marriage ceremony. 881 [307]

Both cross-cousin and avuncular marriages (see p. 367), are often planned by parents for their infant children. Marriage is celebrated by festivals, banquets, and dances. The union is pronounced by the chief. Fish and fishing are important both before and during the ceremony. 584 585

Separation is frequent, the chief cause being that the man seeks a younger and prettier woman. There is no social sanction of adultery, except that the seducer is advised by his companion to go away for a while so as to avoid the husband's revenge. A murderer also flees vengeance. 586 684 682

Death.—Some groups of Nambicwara bury their dead in a circular pit, the corpse being placed in a crouching position. Others leave the corpse to decompose in an elongated ditch and later wash the bones in the river, put them in a basket, and bury them in the village, which is then abandoned. Weapons, implements, adornments, and other property of the deceased are destroyed, but his garden—if he owned one—is abandoned only for a few months. Later anybody may cultivate it. 764

ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Art.—Most Nambicwara groups are completely ignorant of drawing, although some groups decorate calabashes with dots and straight and sinuous lines. These are conventionalized reproductions of realistic designs found among other groups. 531